

Remarks

Examiner Natneal is thanked for the helpful telephone interview on June 18, 2004. The Office Action rejected claims 1-4, 8-11, 13-16, and 18-21 under 35 USC 102(e) in view of the Kobayashi patent (6,088,323). Claim 6 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) in view of the Kobayashi patent (6,088,323). Claims 5, 7-8, 13, 18, 22 and 38-40 were objected to as containing allowable subject matter. Claims 38-40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112 as being indefinite. Claims 23-37 were indicated allowable. The subject matter of claim 38 was indicated allowable if the section 112 rejection was overcome. The Office Action also objected to a second and erroneous claim 38, which is herein canceled. No new matter has been entered.

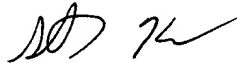
In response to the telephone interview, the allowable subject matter has been incorporated into their respective independent claims. The subject matter of claims 4-5 has been incorporated into claim 1. The subject matter of claims 11-12 has been incorporated into claim 8. The subject matter of claims 16-17 has been incorporated into claim 13. The subject matter of claims 21-22 has been incorporated into claim 18. Accordingly claims 4-5, 11-12, 16-17 and 21-22 have been canceled.

New independent claims 41 and 47 are apparatus and method claims respectively that contain the allowable subject matter as recited in claim 7. Specifically, claim 41 combines the subject matter of claims 1 and 7, while new independent claim 47 combines the subject matter of claims 13 and 7. New dependent claims 42-46 correspond to apparatus claims 2-6, while new dependent claims 48-51 correspond to method claims 14-17.

Regarding claim 38, it was agreed during the telephone interview that the claim was not indefinite and is presently allowable.

Applicant's believe that the remaining pending claims now define over the prior art references and anticipate a Notice of Allowance. The Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned Agent if he feels that any issues regarding patentability remain.

Respectfully submitted,
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